



Conflict in Times of Stress



**“Remember to
listen.”**

Stressful times can mean changes and decisions. People react to stress in different ways, increasing the likelihood of conflict. Conflict isn't bad if you can use it to help reach solutions. When you are in a conflict situation, let others know you still care for them and respect their views. Here are some suggestions to help keep conflict positive.

Ground Rules for “Good” Conflict

- Recognize stress—yours and theirs.
- You have the right to ask for what you want. You may not get what you want, but it is OK to ask.
- The other person has the right to ask for what he or she wants.
- Stay on focus.
- Don't use labeling or name calling.
- Don't bring up the past.

Steps to Follow

- Listen actively. Hear the feelings as well as the words.
- To show that you are listening, paraphrase what you have heard.
- Explain your own feelings. Don't contradict the other person's feelings.
- Refer back to the other person's points.
- Make your point in a friendly way. Remember the rules.
- Ask for ideas and build on them. Don't reject ideas.
- Offer your ideas, and construct a solution from everyone's ideas.

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*Stress and Coping With
Disaster: A Handbook
Compiled Following the
Midwest Flood of 1993 for
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